Numb. 26

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

Quicquid agunt Homines noſtri Farrago Libelli.

From *Tueſday June* 7. to *Thurſday June* 9. 1709.

From my own Apartment, June 8.

I HAVE read the following Letter with Delight and Approbation, and I hereby order Mr. *Kidney* at St. *James's*, and Sir *Thomas* at *White's*, (who are my Clerks for enrolling all Men in their diſtant Claſſes, before they preſume to drink Tea or Chocolate in thoſe Places) to take Care, that the Perſons within the Deſcriptions in the Letter be admitted, and excluded according to my Friend's Remonſtrance.

To *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq; at Mr. *Morphew's* near *Stationers-Hall.*

SIR, June 6. 1709.

YOUR *Paper of* Saturday *has rais'd up in me a noble Emulation, to be recorded in the foremoſt Rank of Worthies therein mention'd; and if any Regard be had to Merit or Induſtry, I may hope to ſucceed in the Promotion, for I have omitted no Toil or Expence to be a Proficient; and if my Friends do not flatter me, they aſſure me, I have not loſt my Time ſince I came to Town. To enumerate but a few Particulars; There's hardly a Coachman I meet with, but deſires to be excus'd taking me, becauſe he has had me before. I have compounded Two or Three Rapes; and let out to Hire as many Baſtards to Beggars. I never ſaw above the Firſt Act of a Play: And as to my Courage, it is well known, I have more than once had ſufficient Witneſſes of my drawing my Sword both in Tavern and Playhouſe.* Dr. Wall *is my particular Friend; and if it were any Service to the Publick to compoſe the Difference between* Martin *and* Sintilaer *the Pearl-driller, I don't know a Judge of more Experience than my ſelf: In that I may ſay with the Poet;*

Quæ Regio in Villâ noſtri non plena Laboris?

I omit other leſſer Particulars, the neceſſary Conſequences of greater Actions. But my Reaſon for troubling you at this preſent is, to put a Stop, if it may be, to an inſinuating, increaſing Set of People, who ſticking to the Letter *of your Treatiſe, and not to the Spirit of it, do aſſume the Name of* Pretty *Fellows; nay, and even get new Names, as you very well hint. Some of them I have heard calling to one another as I have ſat at* White's *and St.* James's, *by the Names of,* Betty, Nelly, *and ſo forth. You ſee them accoſt each other with effeminate Airs: They have their Signs and Tokens like Free-Maſons: They rail at Womenkind; receive Viſits on their Beds in Gowns, and do a Thouſand other unintelligible Prettineſſes that I cannot tell what to make of. I therefore heartily deſire you would exclude all this Sort of Animals.*

There is another Matter I am foreſeeing an ill Conſequence from, and which may be timely prevented by Prudence; which is, that for the laſt Fortnight, there have been prodigious Shoals of Volunteers gone over to bully the French, *upon hearing the Peace was juſt ſigning; and this is ſo true, that I can aſſure you, all Ingroſſing Work about the* Temple *is riſen above* 3 s. *in the Pound for want of Hands. Now as 'tis poſſible, ſome little Alteration of Affairs may have broken their Meaſures, and that they will poſt back again, I am under the laſt Apprehenſion, that theſe will, at their Return, all ſet up for* Pretty Fellows, *and thereby confound all Merit and Service, and impoſe on us ſome new Alteration in our Nightcap-Wigs and Pockets, unleſs you can provide a particular Claſs for them. I cannot apply my ſelf better than to you, and I'm ſure I ſpeak the Mind of a very great Number as deſerving as my ſelf.*

The Pretenſions of this Correſpondent are worthy a particular Diſtinction: He cannot indeed be admitted as a *Pretty*, but is, what we more juſtly call, a *Smart Fellow.* Never to pay at the Playhouſe is an Act of Frugality: That lets you into his Character. And his Expedient in ſending his Children a begging before they can go, are Characteriſtical Inſtances that he belongs to this Claſs. I never ſaw the Gentleman; but I know by his Letter, he ties his Cane at his Button; and by ſome Lines of it, he ſhould wear red heel'd Shoes; which are eſſential Parts of the Habit belonging to the Order of *Smart Fellows.*

My Familiar is return'd with the following Letter from the *French* King.

Verſailles, June 13. 1709.

Lewis the Fourteenth, to *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

SIR,

I Have your Epiſtle, and muſt take the Liberty to ſay, That there has been a Time, when there were Generous Spirits in Great Britain, *who would not have ſuffer'd my Name to be treated with the Familiarity you think fit to uſe. I thought Liberal Men would not be ſuch Time-ſervers, as to fall upon a Man becauſe his Friends are not in Power. But having ſome Concern for what you may tranſmit to Poſterity concerning me, I am willing to keep Terms with you, and make a Requeſt to you, which is, That you would give my Service to the Nineteenth Century, if ever you or yours reach to 'em, and tell 'em, That I have ſettled all Matters between them and me by Monſieur* Boileau. *I ſhould be glad to ſee you here.*

It is very odd this Prince ſhould offer to invite me into his Dominions, or believe I ſhould accept the Invitation. No, no, I remember too well how he ſerved an ingenious Gentleman, a Friend of mine, whom he lock'd up in the *Baſtile*, for no Reaſon in the World, but becauſe he was a Wit, and fear'd he might mention him with Juſtice in ſome of his Writings. His Way is, that all Men of Senſe are prefer'd, baniſh'd, or impriſon'd. He has indeed a Sort of Juſtice in him, like that of the Gameſters; if a Stander by ſees one at Play cheat, he has a Right to come in for Shares, for knowing the Myſteries of the Game. This is a very wiſe and juſt Maxim; and if I have not left at Mr. *Morphew's*, directed to me, Bank Bills for 200*l.* on or before this Day Sevenight, I ſhall tell how *Tom Caſh* got his Eſtate. I expect Three Hundred Pounds of Mr. *Soilett*, for concealing all the Money he has lent to himſelf, and his Landed Friend bound with him, at Thirty *per Cent*, at his Scrivener's. Abſolute Princes make People pay what they pleaſe in Deference to their Power: I do not know why I ſhould not do the ſame, out of Fear or Reſpect to my Knowledge. I always preſerve Decorums and Civilities to the Fair Sex; therefore if a certain Lady, who left her Coach at the *New-Exchange* Door in the *Strand*, and whip'd down *Durham-Yard* into a Boat with a young Gentleman for *Fox-hall*; I ſay, if ſhe will ſend me Word, that I may give the Fan

which

which she drop'd, and I found, to my Sister *Jenny*, there shall be no more said of it. I expect Hush-Money to be regularly sent for every Folly or Vice any one commits in this whole Town; and hope, I may pretend to deserve it better than a Chamber-Maid, or Valet de Chambre: They only whisper it to the little Set of their Companions; but I can tell it to all Men living, or who are to live. Therefore I desire all my Readers to pay their Fines, or mend their Lives.

White's Chocolate-house, June 8.

My Familiar being come from *France*, with an Answer to my Letter to *Lewis* of that Kingdom, instead of going on in a Discourse of what he had seen in that Court, he put on the immediate Concern of a Guardian, and fell to enquiring into my Thoughts and Adventures since his Journey. As short as his Stay had been, I confess'd I had had many many Occasions for his Assistance in my Conduct; but communicated to him my Thoughts of putting all my Force against the horrid and senseless Custom of Duels. If it were possible, said he, to laugh at Things in themselves so deeply Tragical as the impertinent Profusion of Human Life, I think I could divert you with a Figure I saw just after my Death, when the Philosopher threw me, as I told you some Days ago, into the Pail of Water. You are to know, That when Men leave the Body, there are Receptacles for 'em assoon as they depart, according to the Manner in which they liv'd and died. At the very Instant that I was kill'd, there came away with me a Spirit which had lost its Body in a Duel. We were both examin'd. Me, the whole Assembly look'd at with Kindness and Pity, but at the same Time with an Air of Welcome, and Consolation: They pronounc'd me very happy, who had dy'd in Innocence; and told me, a quite different Place was allotted to me, than that which was appointed for my Companion; there being a great Distance from the Mansions of Fools and Innocents: Tho' at the same Time, said one of the Ghosts, there is a great Affinity between an Idiot who has been so for long Life, and a Child who departs before Maturity. But this Gentleman who has arriv'd with you is a Fool of his own making, is ignorant out of Choice, and will fare accordingly. The Assembly began to flock about, and one said to him, Sir, I observ'd you came into the Gate of Persons murder'd, and I desire to know, What brought you to your untimely End? He said, He had been a Second. *Socrates*, who may be said to have been murder'd by the Commonwealth of *Athens*, stood by, and began to draw near him, in order, after his Manner, to lead him into a Sense of his Error by Concessions in his own Discourse. Sir, said that Divine and Amicable Spirit, What was the Quarrel? He answer'd, We shall know very suddenly, when the Principal in the Business comes, for he was desperately wounded before I fell. Sir, said the Sage, Had you an Estate? Yes, Sir, the new Guest answer'd, I have left it in a very good Condition; I made my Will the Night before this Occasion. Did you read it before you sign'd. Yes sure, Sir, said the new Comer. *Socrates* replies, Could a Man that would not give his Estate without reading the Instrument, dispose of his Life without asking a Question? That illustrious Shade turn'd from him, and a Crowd of impertinent Goblins, who had been Droles and Parasites in their Life-time, and were knock'd on the Head for their Sawciness, came about my Fellow Traveler, and made themselves very merry with Questions about the Words *Cart* and *Terce*, and other Terms of Fencers. But his Thoughts began to settle into Reflection upon the Adventure which had rob'd him of his late Being; and with a wretched Sigh, said he, How terrible are Conviction and Guilt when they come too late for Penitence! *Pacolet* was going on in this Strain, when he recover'd from it, and told me, it was too soon to give my Discourse on this Subject so serious a Turn; you have chiefly to do with that Part of Mankind which must be led into Reflection by Degrees, and you must treat this Custom with Humour and Raillery to get an Audience, before you come to pronounce Sentence upon it. There is Foundation enough for raising such Entertainments from the Practice on this Occasion. Don't you know, that often a Man is call'd out of Bed to follow implicitly a Coxcomb (with whom he would not keep Company on any other Occasion) to Ruin and Death: Then a good List of such as are qualified by the Laws of these uncourteous Men of Chivalry to enter into Combat, which are often Persons of Honour without common Honesty. These, I say, rang'd and drawn up in their proper Order, would give an Aversion to doing any Thing in common with such as Men laugh at and contemn. But to go through this Work, you must not let your Thoughts vary, or make Excursions from your Theme: Consider at the same Time, that the Matter has been often treated by the ablest and greatest Writers; yet that must not discourage you; for the properest Person to handle it, is one who has rov'd into mix'd Conversations, and must have Opportunities (which I shall give you) of seeing these Sort of Men in their Pleasures and Gratifications; among which, they pretend to reckon Fighting. It was pleasantly enough said of a Bully in *France*, when Duels first began to be punish'd: The King has taken away Gaming, and Stage-playing, and now Fighting too; How does he expect Gentlemen shall divert themselves?

Errata, *In our last*, Col. 1. Lin. 17. *for* Chimæra call'd Groundless, *read*, Chimærical Groundless.

Whereas several Gentlemen have desir'd this Paper, with a blank Leaf to write Business on, and for the Convenience of the Post; This is to give Notice, that this Day, and for the future, it may be had of Mr. Morphew *near* Stationers-Hall.

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